BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

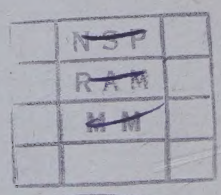
REPORT

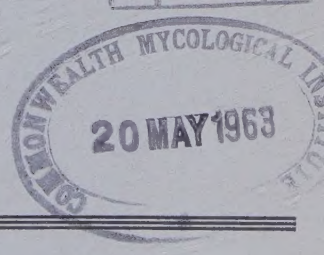
OF THE

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOR THE YEAR

1960





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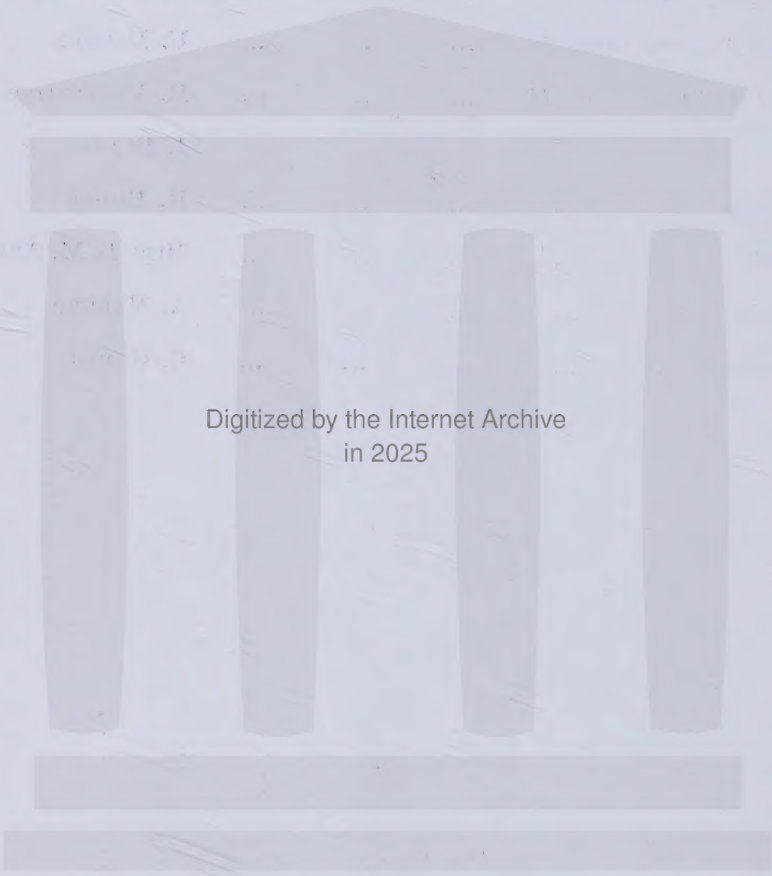

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Section 1

REVIEW OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

1. Weather Conditions:

The total rainfall for the year recorded at the Agricultural Station was 71.52 inches as compared with 37.76 inches in 1959. The average annual precipitation over the past 10 years was 50.55 inches.

The rains in May which measured 13.36 inches caused severe damage especially to roads. Crop damage was not severe.

Hurricane "Donna" passed the Virgin Islands in September, causing much damage especially to the island of Anegada. There was considerable loss of goats and crops. Anegada's rainfall in 1960 was 55.00 inches as compared with 34.47 inches for 1959.

A statement of the monthly rainfall figures for the years 1951 to 1960 as recorded at the Agricultural Station, Tortola is set out in appendix 1.

2. Sugar Cane:

The production of sugar cane is being pursued. Sugar cane is used for rum manufacture, which is in the most part exported to the United States Virgin Islands. During the year the exports of rum totalled 1,746 gallons as compared with 2,853 gallons in 1959. The decrease is due to more land being put to pasture for livestock grazing.

3. Limes:

The value of the exports of limes in 1960 was nearly double that for the year 1959. This can be attributed in the most part to weather conditions. The export value was $603 as compared with $354 in 1959.

4. Coconuts:

Seed nuts of the dwarf variety have been ordered from St. Lucia and it is expected that they will arrive early in 1961. Coconuts are fast becoming an important crop and the planting of trees is being encouraged. As stated in last year's report the selection of seed nuts from high-yielding parent trees growing on local estates as well as on the Agricultural Station is being continued.

5. Bananas:

The production of bananas was stimulated by high prices the average being $1.75 per bunch. Production was estimated to be 3,000 bunches during the year under review. The department is therefore endeavouring to make available more planting material to the farmers.

6. Food Crops:

With such favourable weather conditions the output of food crops has increased. The value of exports during the year 1960 amounted to $23,500 as com-

pared with $14,000 during the year 1959. There has been a substantial increase in the market price of sweet potatoes. The price received in 1960 was $18.00 a barrel as compared with $15.00 a barrel in 1959. Government has launched a programme to encourage farmers in the use of fertilizers to increase their yield of food crops.

7. Livestock:

(i) *Cattle:* Cattle raising continued to be pursued with great interest and good results during the year. Exports continued to both the French West Indies and St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands. There was a slight increase in exports to the French West Indies despite hurricane "Donna" which caused great damage and some losses to the sailing craft of these islands. The export of female stock, although it represents approximately 61% of the total exports has no effect on the breeding stock. Heifers exported are in the most part culls, but it is hoped that the holding ground will greatly assist in the controlling these exports. The prices paid for cattle are as follows:

Cattle sold in St. Thomas — 16c. to 17c. per lb. liveweight.

Cattle sold in Tortola — 14c. to 15c. per lb. liveweight.

There has been no change in the prices which were fixed in 1958.

(ii) *Sheep and Goats:* The demand for these animals is steadily increasing and they are reared on almost every farm. Breeding stock from the Agricultural Station is however, still limited. The health of these animals remained satisfactory during the year.

(iii) *Swine:* Breeding stock from the Agricultural Station continued to be made available to farmers during the year. The introduction of the berkshire breed in 1942 has contributed greatly towards improving the quality of the local stock.

(iv) *Poultry:* The production of poultry is chiefly for meat and eggs for the local market, and interest has continued during the year. In addition to organized production which is well managed, chickens are reared on practically every farm. both to supply families with eggs and meat, as well as for cash sale.

(v) *Horsekind:* Horses, mules and donkeys continued to be bred during the year. Twenty-seven horses and four mules were exported to the French West Indies during 1960.

8. Agricultural Exports:

Livestock: Table I sets out the number of animals exported during 1960 as compared with 1958 and 1959. At table II is the Analysis of livestock exported according to type and sex.

Table 1:

Exports — 1958, 1959, 1960

Year	Destination	*Cattle*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Swine*	Total
1958	St. Thomas	409	382	836	668	2,295
	French West Indies ...	759	—	—	—	759
	Leeward Islands ...	67	—	—	—	67
	Totals	1,235	382	836	668	3,121
1959	St. Thomas	580	392	846	601	2,419
	French West Indies ...	282	—	—	—	282
	Leeward Islands ...	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	862	392	846	601	2,701
1960	St. Thomas	815	372	839	663	2,689
	French West Indies ...	390	—	—	—	390
	Leeward Islands ...	—	—	—	—	—
	Totals	1,205	372	839	663	3,080

Table II

TYPE & SEX ANALYSIS OF EXPORTS, 1960 TO ST. THOMAS, VIRGIN ISLANDS ONLY

Type	*Sex*	*Number*	*Total*
Cattle	Bulls	311	
	Steers	4	
	Cows	335	
	Heifers	165	815
Sheep	Rams	211	
	Ewes	161	372
Goats	Bucks	306	
	Wethers	25	
	Does	508	839
	Boars	88	
Swine	Barrows	207	
	Sows	368	663
			2,689

Other Agricultural Products:

A summary of the value of the agricultural exports for 1960 compared with 1958 and 1959 is set out in appendix ll.

Section II

WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The work of the department is concerned chiefly with encouraging good animal husbandry and health, the fostering of livestock production, and the management of the Tortola Agricultural Station and Livestock Farm. Further activities carried out are as follows:—

(a) The provision of improved planting material to farmers.
(b) Forest protection and soil and water conservation.
(c) Administration of agricultural and fisheries loans.

B. TORTOLA AGRICULTURAL STATION AND LIVESTOCK FARM

2. Area and Location:

As stated in last year's report the area comprising the Agricultural Station and Livestock Farm is 68 acres, and it is situated approximately half of a mile from Road Town. The area is confined almost exclusively to the production of breeding stock for sale to farmers. A small area is used for experimental planting and nurseries. It is intended to extend the experimental planting area in 1961.

3. Cattle:

The herd at the Agricultural Station is maintained for the purpose of demonstrating to farmers improved methods in livestock raising. The herd is of three quarters Red Poll and one quarter Senegal strain. Thirteen calves were born during the year, of which number eight were heifers and five bulls. Deaths amounted to five, one bull and four cows. Five Nelthrop bulls were imported from St. Croix, of which four were sold to farmers and one was kept for breeding purposes at the Station. It is hoped to dispose of one of the older bulls which is becoming no longer serviceable. The herd now comprises:—

Bulls	*Bull Calves*	*Cows*	*Heifers*	TOTAL
3	7	15	15	40

4. Horses:

Four Government owned horses are kept at the Station for riding. During the year their condition was excellent. One gelding was sold.

5. Kentucky Jack Donkey:

"Colonel Dunway", the pure bred Jack continued to give service throughout the year. Demand for his services continues. It has not yet been possible to replace him but every effort will be made to do so next year.

6. Mules:

The draught mule maintained excellent condition throughout the year under review.

7. Blackhead Persian Sheep:

These animals had to be treated during the year for internal parasites, but despite this, the flock maintained good condition throughout the year. Twelve lambs were born, of which five were rams and seven ewes. It is hoped to introduce the Barbados Black Bellied sheep for crossing with the Blackhead in 1961. The Blackhead although known for its meat qualities has its litter confined to singles. Sales to farmers during the year were as follows:—

Two Rams and three Ewes.

8. Berkshire Pigs:

The number of piglets born during the year was 19, of which nine were boars and ten gilts. The sales to farmers during the year consisted of seven boars and nine gilts. Two boars and one gilt died. The pigs maintained excellent condition throughout the year.

9. Anglo-Nubian Goats:

Eleven kids were born during the year of which seven were bucks and four does. Two bucks died and the sales to farmers were as follows:—

Three bucks and two does.

It is hoped that new buck will be purchased during the next year.

10. Stud Services:

The record of stud services by Government owned sires which are kept at the Agricultural Station and Livestock Farm are as follows:—

Jack "Colonel Dunway"	14
$\frac{3}{4}$ Red Poll x $\frac{1}{4}$ Senegal Bull "Comando"	8
Anglo-Nubian Buck	1
Berkshire Boar	23

11. Distribution of Planting Material:

The department continued with the propagation of economic and ornamental plants, and one thousand dwarf seed coconuts were ordered from St. Lucia in order to establish this variety here. Due to shipping difficulties however, these will not arrive before 1961.

Citrus and two new varieties of grafted mango plants were ordered from Puerto Rico. These will not be ready for shipment before next year.

One thousand mahogany seedlings were imported from St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands of which approximately 500 have been distributed. The distribution and /or, sale of plants were as follows:—

Cabbage seedlings	359	dozens
Tomato seedlings	101	,,
Egg Plant seedlings	50	,,
Sweet pepper seedlings	92	,,
Papaw seedlings	127	
Sweet potato cuttings	15,000	
Cassava cuttings	6,000	
Grafted mango plants	175	
Coconut seedlings	120	
Mahogany seedlings	150	
Cedar seedlings	800	
Ornamental plants	200	

C. INVESTIGATIONAL WORK

12. Sweet Potato:

The department is continuing to make available to farmers cuttings of the B44 variety. With the expansion of the nursery in 1961 it is hoped that the output will be doubled.

13. Pangola Grass:

Pangola grass is recommended to all farmers for the establishment of their pastures, and the response has been encouraging. The main virtues of pangola grass are the rapidity with which it becomes established, its palatability, its drought-resistance and nutritive value. The Department maintained two nurseries. During the year 672 bags of pangola grass were distributed to farmers.

D. EXTENSION & DEVELOPMENT WORK

14. Inspection Service:

The Department continued to maintain its inspection service during the year, both for the exportation and the importation of animals and plants.

15. Animal Health:

Anaplasmosis and Piroplasmosis: These diseases were diagnosed but were only confined to one herd with a loss of four animals. All other animals in the herd were successfully treated.

Parasites: Both internal and external parasites occur generally and are treated with appropriate drugs. The programme of voluntary dipping continued during the year.

Swine Fever: A total of nine hundred and fifty pigs were vaccinated as compared with 722 in 1959.

16. Grassland Management (Scheme D—2788 & A):

The purpose of this Scheme was to establish 8 five acre plots of pastures in order to demonstrate to farmers better pasture management and the benefits of pan-

gola grass. At the end of the year all the plots had been planted with grass, and water supplies installed in 5 of the plots. Two of the plots have been planted entirely with pangola grass and the remaining six with both guinea grass and pangola grass. It is estimated that 28 acres are planted in pangola grass and the remaining 12 in guinea grass.

17. Forestry (Scheme D—3573) & Soil and Water Conservation:

(a) *Sage Mountain:* At the top of Sage Mountain on Tortola there is the remains of a Xerophytic rain forest which has been declared protected. The area is 92 acres and at the end of 1960, 78 acres had been demarcated and fenced.

(b) *Food Forestry:* Grafting and budding were practised on mangoes, oranges and pears with favourable results. This work was confined mostly to mangoes and experimental work only was done on pears and oranges. It is hoped that top grafting of mangoes would be done on a much larger scale throughout the entire Colony in future.

2. Soil and Water Conservation:

During the year 1960 three guts were demarcated with the view of declaring them protected water areas. These guts are Great Mountain, Long Bush and Joes Hill on Tortola.

In addition a small nursery was maintained at the Agricultural Station from which farmers could obtain forest trees for planting.

The Forest Ranger attended a three month's course in Forestry in Puerto Rico, from which he has benefitted greatly.

18. Pilot Project in Market Gardening (Scheme D—2717(42):

This Scheme which commenced as an experiment late in 1957 was continued. The experiment showed good results in 1958, but was hampered in 1959 due to low rainfall. It was again hampered due to the heavy rains in May, 1960 (see appendix I), which caused severe erosion, and were accountable for much loss in crops. However, by the end of the year good results were evident from vegetables produced.

19. Stock Farm (Scheme D—2794 & A):

The purpose of this Scheme is to establish at Paraquita Bay on Tortola a Stock holding ground. Over the years farmers have been forced to export immature male animals and to a certain extent young female stock. The purpose of establishing a holding ground is to purchase female animals which could be retained in the case of male stock for maturing and then for exportation; and in the case of female stock for re-sale to farmers when there is a demand for heifers for breeding.

One hundred and eighty-four acres of land have been acquired on the western side of Paraquita Bay, and another 77.75 acres purchased on the eastern side At the end of the year it was estimated that 40 acres on the western side had been cleared and fenced, and 25.5 acres planted with pangola grass.

20. Agricultural Credit:

Agricultural Credit is designed solely for the purpose of assisting farmer with the development of their pastures in the form of clearing, paddocking, planting grass and in many cases, replanting. Good use has been made of this assistance by the farmers, and it can be clearly seen that in the not too distant future a much larger sum or sums will have to be made available for this purpose.

Maintenance work and paddocking of the existing pastures continued to be the major use made of such loans, however, approximately 80 acres of new pasture have been established during the period under review.

Loans issued and repayments made during 1960 as compared with the year 1959 are as follows:—

Old Scheme (Agricultural Credit Fund)

1959		1960	
23 Loans	... $5,440.00	18 Loans	... $4,290.00
Repayments	... 5,269.67	Repayments	... 5,332.71

New Scheme (Pasture Improvement Fund)

1959		1960	
31 Loans	... $5,875.00	9 Loans	... $1,725.00
Repayments	... 1,017.71	Repayments	... 2,448.99

21. Fisheries Credit:

Fishing continues to be of vital importance. Fish is the main source of protein food in the Colony. The Department administers a Fishing Loan Scheme which makes available capital to fishermen to assist in the industry. This form of assistance has played a very important role as it has helped fishermen to purchase engines which enabled them to get their fish to market more quickly than before the Scheme started. It also helped them with fishing equipment. Three outboard engines were purchased under this Scheme for fishermen, and assistance was given to one fisherman to purchase a diesel inboard engine during the year.

Loans issued and repayments made in 1960 as compared with the year 1959 are as follows:—

1959		1960	
7 Loans ...	... $1,525.00	10 Loans ...	... $3,269.25
Repayments	... 2,590.69	Repayments	... 3,625.04

22. Agricultural Shows:

Weather conditions being favourable, the agricultural shows were successful having numerous entries of pastures and cultivations. The small stock exhibited were rather disappointing both in number and quality. The exhibits of cattle,

horses and mules were however, excellent in condition, and their numbers good. The table below shows some of the main exhibits:—

Exhibit	*Virgin Gorda*	*Jost Van Dyke*	*Tortola*	TOTAL
Cattle	67	30	44	141
Sheep	12	9	6	27
Goats	3	15	7	25
Swine	3	4	13	20
Poultry	2 pens	2 pens	1 pen	5 pens
Pastures	8	2	19	29
Horses	—	—	15	15
Mules	—	—	10	10
Asses	—	—	2	2
Cultivations	1	—	9	10

The handicraft exhibits were disappointing for although the quality was on a very high standard there were not many of them.

The Shows were held at the following places:—
21st November at the Valley, Virgin Gorda
22nd November at Great Harbour, Jost Van Dyke
24th November at Road Town, Tortola.

23. Visitors:

The Department received visits from the following persons:—

His Honour the Administrator, Captain G. J. Bryan, O.B.E., M.C.
The Honourable Leslie Malone, Member for Trade and Production
The Honourable H. R. Penn, M.B.E., M.L.C.
Dr. Luther Fahlund, Veterinary Officer, St. Thomas
Several classes from the Elementary and Secondary Schools
Numerous farmers.

Section III

24. Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes:

The following Schemes relating to agriculture are in operation:—

Scheme	*Total Grant*	*Amount spent in 1960*	*Amount spent up to 31st December, 1960*	*Balance*
	$	$	$	$
Scheme D-2717(42) *"Pilot Project in Market Gardening"* The purpose of this Scheme is to demonstrate to market gardeners the improved methods in market gardening ...	1,400.00	—	1,122.00	278.00
Scheme D-2788 *"Grassland Management"* The purpose of this Scheme is to train farmers in improved methods of grassland management	14,736.40	342.00	12,645.40	2,091.00
Scheme D-2794 *"Stock Farm"* The purpose of this Scheme is to provide facilities for feeding up and finishing off beef cattle for export in the best possible condition. Work on this Scheme is in progress	115,310.00	35,130.28	37,175.47	78,134.00
Scheme D-3573 *"Forestry Development"* The purpose of this Scheme is to demonstrate measures of soil conservation in selected areas as well as re-afforestation in denuded areas, and the protection of water courses.	5,600.00	420.18	1,018.28	4,581.72

Section IV

25. Summary of Agricultural Legislation:

No legislation dealing with agriculture was enacted during the year 1960.

Appendix 1

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT, TORTOLA, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

RETURN OF RAINFALL

From
January, 1951 to December, 1960

	YEARS										*10-yearly monthly average*
	1951	**1952**	**1953**	**1954**	**1955**	**1956**	**1957**	**1958**	**1959**	**1960**	
JANUARY	1.74	6.49	3.35	2.18	1.16	2.80	2.27	4.57	2.97	2.08	2.96
FEBRUARY	.97	.83	1.01	4.47	1.23	2.72	1.48	2.53	1.48	2.02	1.87
MARCH	.46	1.48	2.94	1.36	1.49	1.62	2.13	.83	.59	1.92	1.48
APRIL	1.11	7.38	1.11	1.68	2.83	1.94	1.11	4.14	2.31	8.60	3.22
MAY	9.56	1.84	1.37	1.84	2.16	3.28	1.45	13.20	5.51	13.36	5.36
JUNE	5.37	2.72	8.60	4.10	3.20	6.97	2.98	8.45	1.49	4.64	4.85
JULY	4.91	9.15	3.32	1.78	3.23	1.34	3.24	8.00	2.96	8.03	4.60
AUGUST	4.58	4.40	4.58	5.15	8.91	4.57	3.23	3.47	2.93	2.35	4.42
SEPTEMBER	10.80	14.44	13.05	11.83	9.12	5.14	.56	3.43	3.88	8.53	8.08
OCTOBER	6.06	4.26	2.04	9.43	4.90	6.30	3.30	6.78	4.37	1.09	4.85
NOVEMBER	3.50	8.61	3.62	4.35	2.90	5.20	7.92	3.82	5.72	8.00	5.36
DECEMBER	7.36	1.54	2.72	3.03	2.16	3.35	7.11	1.66	3.55	10.90	4.34
TOTALS	56.42	63.14	47.71	51.20	43.29	45.23	36.78	60.88	37.76	71.52	51.39

10—*year mean* **51.39** *inches*

Appendix II

PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

COMMODITY	1956 *Value* $	1957 *Value* $	1958 *Value* $	1959 *Value* $	1960 *Value* $	*Average Value* $
Limes	180.75	192.90	312.50	354.00	603.00	328.63
Tomatoes ...	53.45	9.15	39.00	2.50	1.00	20.82
Coconuts ...	1,156.97	1,046.38	1,277.50	1,199.25	2,102.20	1,446.46
Rum	4,251.50	9,651.50	6,522.00	7,274.60	6,164.50	6,772.82
Livestock ...	86,106.70	109,865.90	120,727.50	102,350.00	126,965.00	109,203.02
Other Agricultural Products * ...	17,233.27	10,617.00	10,509.63	12,438.66	20,776.55	14,315,02
Fish	8,956.30	8,815.00	7,146.75	8,120.55	13,377.50	9,283.22
TOTALS ...	117,938.94	140,197.83	146,984.88	131,739.56	169,989.75	141,369.99

Note: * include forest products, fruits, vegetables and ground provision.

Appendix III

VALUE OF IMPORTS OF CERTAIN COMMODITIES

INTO THE

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Foodstuffs for human consumption	1956 $	1957 $	1958 $	1959 $	1960 $	*Average value* $
Wheaten Flour ...	52,700.84	61,431.23	53,005.02	50,164.28	39,706.19	51,401.51
Cornmeal (Maize)	4,025.00	3,763.99	6,643.37	1,992.60	3,304.05	3,891.40
Rice	7,615.41	9,528.39	9,833.74.	9,972.90	9,706.15	9,331.32
Bread and Biscuits	6,911.33	5,732.88	5,601.40	5,477.77	7,330.44	6,210.76
Butter and Substitutes	5,746.11	6,636.08	6,664.30	7,059.29	6,940.11	6,611.18
Lard and Substitutes	6,278.34	7,787.64	7,316,64	6,437.83	5,688.23	6,701.73
Edible Oils ...	2,259.00	3,522.93	4,045.56	4,371.99	6,463.27	4,132.55
Preserved Milk	12,308.71	12,925.53	14,880.12	18,113.62	19,691.34	15,583.86
Cheese	3,295.21	3,880.95	4,639.22	5,344.37	5,202.04	4,472.36
Preserved Meat	12,269.45	12,082.30	17,388.15	17,630.89	21,588.86	16,191.93
Preserved Fish	6,471.28	5,197.75	5,970.43	6,834.77	6,013.26	6,097.49
Fruit & Vegetables	794.61	1,281.60	9,719.71	12,646.30	13,886.78	7,656.79
Coffee	3,121.32	3,346.67	2,977.65	3,148.30	3,090.27	3,136.84
Tea	480.76	439.80	378.87	226.50	340.94	373.37
Cocoa	1,303.43	1,652.96	1,721.24	1,831.30	1,666.35	1,635.05
Sugar	37.090.09	37,829.76	30,845,06	25,366.97	33,261.32	32,878.64
TOTALS ...	162,670.89	181,599.90	184,881.58	177,229.30	183,879.60	176,306.78
Animal Feeding Stuffs	3,120.08	6,730.84	6,205.94	13,783.39	13,402.46	8,648.54